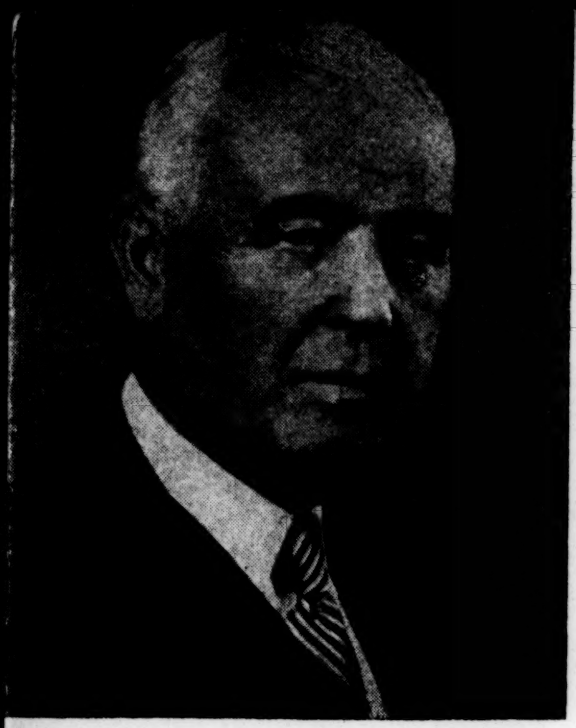

ENVELOPE SERIES

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OF RELIGION

CONFRONTING MOSLEMS WITH JESUS CHRIST

By FRED FIELD GOODSELL

Also

World Service Exposition in Hartford

AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS 14 Beacon St., Boston

A QUARTERLY

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Alexander Ferguson, *Director of Visual Aids Department*

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

DEAR READER:

It is with deep satisfaction that we bring you in this holiday period Dr. Goodsell's thought-provoking, illuminating article in which he has presented to us the cause so close to his own heart for many years—the approach of the Christian to the Moslem, the Westerner to the man of the Near East. On page 24 we have given a brief biographical sketch of Dr. Goodsell. Here is one of the great missionaries of the American Board —for, though he has spent nineteen years in the administration of the Board, he was even then, and will always be, first of all a missionary. One of his colleagues remarked once, "It is probably a crime that the American Board took away from Turkey a great, perhaps the greatest, missionary in recent times to that land and laid upon him the administrative load here when he should have been dreaming, and leading, and praying in the mission."

Officially Dr. Goodsell has retired. Like many of us he looked forward to that day when he would be free to write the things he wanted to write, and study, as, with his scholarly interests he wanted to study. For nineteen years there has been little or no time for that! So the first thing he did was to go back to the Near East for a last visit. It was a wonderful experience, and it must have given him endless cause for gratitude that he could see so many fruits of the planting he had helped to make, for Dr. Goodsell was in Turkey at the time when the great revolution which brought Turkey into being as a Republic was taking place and was one of those who shaped the new policy of the mission and dared to make the venture the American Board has been making in that land. Turkey is trying a magnificent and exciting experiment in nation building. The long years of slow, conservative life where progress had seemed

so difficult have led her to separate Church and State sharply. But we American Christians also believe in the separation of Church and State. Perhaps, therefore, we have a message for just this time and just this land, not as Americans but as Christians. And we believe that Christian personality and life, with no axe to grind, and no selfish interests to be served, will make its witness and its gift.

Our American Christians have not always understood this part of the American Board's work; they have not always thought of it as one of the great adventures of the Church. This is a good year to learn about it. The recent pamphlet "Out Where the East Begins" gives the record of our present work in Turkey, the work of pastors and doctors, and publishers and writers, translators and editors, making a free gift in the name of Christ. This is part of Our Christian World Mission.

All my life I shall remember a smart, well-dressed Turkish young woman on a railroad train who told me brightly and interestingly about the social work she herself was establishing in the capital city—of how she was trying to find women like herself to start that work, young women discontented with the petty round of social life and with the futility of self-centered existence, and of how she had found a new zest in living as she undertook that service. Then she said, "I don't suppose you *could* know Mary Kinney," and when I told her that Mary Kinney was a school-teacher in Boston and a member of my church, she said, "How can I tell you what that woman meant to me?" "It's because of her that I can't pass by lonely, and hungry, and frightened people. It's *because of her* that I *have* to do that social work and pull my friends in to help me." I said to her, "Do you know why Mary Kinney came to Turkey?" "Oh, yes," she said, "I know all about that! She had a good salary in Boston and a fine work there, but she left it to work in a land that was not her own. She had the Prophet Jesus stamped on her! And somehow she rubbed Him off on us. I'll never forget the

words he taught Mary Kinney—whenever you do loving service to one of these little ones you are doing it for God himself."

It is this ineradicable impression and its consequences, in good will, in a fresh interpretation of patriotism, in a new approach to vocation, and a new respect for human life and personality, that Dr. Goodsell would like us to see. We hope you will do more than just read this article. We hope you will find an opportunity to discuss it in a round-table, a class, a church night meeting, a youth group. The 12 questions asked by Dr. Goodsell on pp. 17 and 18 with his answers, and the pointed personal questions on p. 23, directed at you and me, are designed to facilitate such discussion.

Don't miss the delightful account on page 27 of the World Exposition in Hartford, Connecticut. It did a lot to educate the people of the church and some of their neighbors, but the most important result it had was the stimulated interest and new dynamic for Missions and Church of the many who participated in its preparation. Any church would be thrilled and helped by such a venture. We of the Missions Council* would be glad to help you to do something on your own of the same sort.

A Happy New Year to you as you try to find God's will for this world and your part in its life in these difficult times.

RUTH ISABEL SEABURY

Boston, Mass.
December 15, 1950

* Write to the Boston or Chicago office for details and for loan exhibits (14 Beacon St., Boston; 19 South La Salle, Chicago).

CONFRONTING MOSLEMS WITH JESUS CHRIST

By FRED FIELD GOODSELL

I

Where Moslems Live

Approximately one-sixth of the human race is bound together in the social, religious and cultural brotherhood of Islam. This brotherhood covers many lands and races, and is edging into new areas, especially in Africa. Pan Islam* as a movement did not fulfill the hopes of its leaders, but the essential unity of the Moslem† world over against non-Islamic peoples and cultures cannot be denied.

Surprises are in store for an uninitiated Westerner who makes even a casual survey of the Moslem areas and populations of the world. In one of the most effective passages of his book, "Young Islam on Trek," Basil Matthews refers to Spain's experience with the Moslem:

> "The piratic raids of the Sulus on the quieter Philippine tribes were going vigorously forward when the towering sails of strange ships came careering out of the East. They were the five ships of Spain that had under Magellan made the longest voyage ever so far taken by mortal man, seven times longer than that of Columbus—the voyage from Spain around Cape Horn and across the Pacific. Now their daring captains had discovered the Philippines. Imagine the shock to the Spaniards! They had driven the last Moslem from the shores of Spain in the year when Columbus found America. Sailing right round to the other side of the world, they landed on a savage island and found Moslems there! They called them by the name of the Moslems they had fought in Spain —Moros or Moors. And that name the descendants of the island people bear today."‡

The story of how 10,000,000 of China's present inhabitants came to inherit Moslem traditions and the Moslem faith is

* Pan-Islam was a movement to unite all Moslems in closer international body.

† Moslems are followers of Mohammed, i.e., Mohammedans. Islam is the name of their religion.

‡ P. 177.

paralleled only by the steady push today of Moslem merchant-missionaries into tropical Africa, East, West, and Central.

One might expect the lands bordering on Arabia, the cradle of Islam, to contain a very high percentage of Moslems as they do but what shall we think of the 20,000,000 in Russia, the 50,000,000 in India, and more than 50,000,000 in the new state of Pakistan? A community of 64,000,000 Moslems live in Indonesia.

Striking changes have occurred within the last decade in the political relationships of vast Moslem communities. Indonesia has become independent, likewise India, Pakistan, Iraq, Transjordan, and Syria—all Moslem countries. Lebanon, half Moslem, half Christian, is also a free and independent republic. This is in sharp contrast to the situation a few years ago when it was estimated that only 21% of the entire Moslem world community lived under independent Moslem governments.

II

Islam a Spiritual Problem

What is it that binds these widely scattered millions upon millions of people together? Wherein lies their unity in diversity of race and culture? There must be some deeply satisfying human appeal in a faith which can spread over the earth like this and maintain itself across the centuries since A.D. 622.

It is easy to point to certain characteristics of the system of Islam which are readily adopted and adapted by races alien to the founder, Mohammed. The recitation of the brief creed, the observance of formal prayer, the giving of alms, the keeping of the fasts, and the undertaking of the pilgrimage to Mecca—all to be done or not according to the ability of the believer—these duties of a good Moslem must rank as superficial symbols of the brotherhood. The dogmatic requirements are simple. Orthodox Moslems are required to believe in God and in angels, in

the revealed Scriptures and in the prophets, in a day of judgment and in predestination.* All these things carry with them the stamp of Arabia as it was in the seventh century A.D., molded by the masterful spirit of Mohammed. They reflect the customs and culture of a stage of development in the life of a Semitic people of rare human endowments. They do not define the real bonds which hold incongruous masses of humanity together in the brotherhood of Islam.

We get a truer insight when we think of Islam as a spiritual problem. We might ponder the fact that Mohammed as a religious leader made it very easy for men of any race to count on the sanctions and promises of religion without submitting to high ethical requirements. Moslem thinkers make quite a point of the fact that Islamic teachings provide for the complete satisfaction of all human desires. It may be that it is not so much what Mohammed as a religious leader *required* as what he *failed to require* of his followers that binds them together. It is not so much what orthodox Moslems in China or in the Congo are commanded to observe as what they are allowed to practice *with full religious sanction* that constitutes the unity in diversity. The positive superficial requirements of the system give it, to be sure, almost a military aspect. The creed is a kind of war-cry: "There is no God but God and Mohammed is his prophet." The discipline of prayer five times a day is a drill. The muezzin cry from the minaret is in the nature of a bugle call. The Koran is the book of regulations. Here is form, however, with a minimum of content. Here is a semblance of moral discipline often without spiritual ideals. The Moslem world from center to circumference seems to be a brotherhood held together loosely by certain more or less mechanical regulations but inwardly unified by a range of moral license under the sanction of law and religion which robs it of moral insight and spiritual power. One

* See "Introducing Islam," by Christy Wilson. An excellent summary in pamphlet form. (60 cents.)

may find adequate justification for this statement in a careful examination touching, for instance, the attitudes toward women and toward war, sanctioned both by the practice and teaching of Mohammed.

Islam is a spiritual problem even to itself. For instance, an issue of a daily paper published in Ankara, the capital of Turkey, reported that the teachers of the country had been meeting in conference. The editorial writer was deeply aware of their real problems as teachers of the youth of Turkey today. He writes most incisively and yet most sympathetically concerning "The Moral Struggle." In pointing out the contrast between the old despotic regime and the republican order he says that whereas the Sultanate* regarded education as a danger to the power of the State, the Republic is based upon intellect and character. Many nations through century-long struggles have fought their way from despotism to democracy but the Turkish nation is trying to bridge this gap in a few years. The Revolution of 1909 in Turkey failed primarily because of ignorance and a lack of a keen national consciousness. The Revolution of 1922 succeeded because the Turkish people accepted a modern democratic system of government with its institutions, its laws, its principles, its education and its customs. This system can endure only on two conditions: thorough administrative reforms and popular education. And then follow these two significant paragraphs:

"In the Teachers' Congress we greatly desired that not only general and theoretical questions pertaining to the teaching profession should be discussed, but that our present moral and educational deficiencies should be dealt with frankly and fearlessly. Unfortunately the most important of these deficiencies is our lack of patience to admit and to consider our deficiencies.

"Whatever the faults of the present generation our first business is to find ways and means of preventing the fixing of our own faults in our children. Let us not deny the fact that we have some fundamental faults. If because of easy-going tolerance these faults pass from generation to

* Before the Revolution Turkey was ruled by the Sultan, an ecclesiastical leader who was at the same time a political ruler.

generation as a moral inheritance, it cannot be asserted that the Republic rests upon a sound foundation."

Here is Moslem culture aware of moral peril. Here is real though modest acknowledgment of moral failure in the past and a sense of moral responsibility for the future. Here is the cry of the human heart for something which can satisfy a vaguely sensed need of spiritual regeneration.

Defenders of the Moslem way of life have sometimes advanced the argument that the requirements of the Sermon on the Mount and the teaching of Jesus generally, are so severe as to discourage all human endeavor to put them into practice. This position carries with it a frank recognition of the nobility of Jesus' ideals for human life, a sincere tribute to His moral supremacy. But it argues to the point that the Moslem way of life is more practical because it is easy to achieve, it is within the range of human frailty. This reveals at a glance the inner nature of Islam as a spiritual problem. Islam lacks the moral dynamic without which Jesus' teaching or any lofty moral code is a counsel of despair rather than a basis for hope. There is nothing in Islam comparable to the word "Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God." Or that other word "Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth by itself alone, but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." Islam moves essentially within the realm of law which, if disregarded, condemns a man to final failure, while Jesus speaks the word and mediates the spiritual power which means strength in the midst of weakness, life in the midst of death. Paul's note "I can do all things through Him that strengtheneth me" sounds in a chorus of voices which know from deep spiritual experience what it is to pass from death to life.

Islam is then essentially a spiritual problem. It is our realization of this fact and what lies back of it that intensifies our chagrin as followers of Jesus that from the first day of the Moslem era until the present moment, thirteen centuries, in all their

major contacts with Christendom, Moslems have had little opportunity to learn of Christ as a spiritual Saviour. The Moslem vision of Christ has been obscured by many aspects of so-called Christian civilization. Unworthy lives of nominal Christians have been the darkest cloud. Political intrigue and war have been others. Predisposed by all that he knew through his own sacred books and teachers* to honor Jesus as a great prophet, the Moslem has read the open book of life in so-called Christian countries, only to find that the teaching and example of Jesus have not been taken in earnest by many who have professed his name. He has made up his mind from his earliest to his latest contacts with Christian nations and Christian peoples that they are Christian but not Christ-like. No one more justifiably than he has pointed the finger of scorn and contempt at the Christian churches he knew from actual contact and shouted "hypocrite." His own rigid conception of the unity of politics and religion in which religion is usually degraded to the position of a political tool has been so often confirmed by his experience and observation of Christendom that his eyes have been blinded to the essentially spiritual nature of the religion of Jesus.

These facts set the problem and mark the measure of the task of those who would confront Moslems with Jesus Christ in his beauty and power as a Saviour of the spirit of man. To a large extent, also, they define the methods which should be used. They make clear the futility of confessing Christ as Lord with the lips and denying Him in life. They make clear with damning logic the folly of Christian churches in sending their representatives among Moslem peoples unless at the same time there is effective protest at home against the traditional policies of self-seeking rivalry and conscienceless intrigue which their governments so often follow. As it becomes steadily clearer to us as well as to Moslems that Christianity holds no brief for the un-

* Mohammed counted Jesus among the five prophet-teachers his followers must acknowledge.

christian aspects of western civilization, the basic unity of persons in all nations seeking spiritual vitality will be recognized. The missionary enterprise demands the support of a diplomacy which builds upon honesty and goodwill in international relations and which refuses to destroy where it cannot participate in building up the Kingdom of God among men.

The United Nations organization brings to many people, including Moslems, renewed hope for order and peace on a worldwide basis. The World Mission of the Christian Church will find ways to coöperate with many enterprises sponsored by the United Nations, but it must steadily hold all such enterprises under the scrutiny of God who is the God of justice as well as of peace.

III

The Moslem World meets the West

It is wholesome for us Westerners to see ourselves as Moslems see us. In some parts of the Moslem world, notably Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, and Egypt, where the impact of Western civilization has for some decades been terrific, and just now in Iran, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia where the West is heavily involved in developing vast oil deposits, the dominant impression of Western civilization has underscored a materialistic view of life. *The gods of the West are technological.* Machinery is the measure of civilization. As a Turkish newspaper described it, civilization has at least four levels: A nation reaches up to the lowest level of civilization when it can use Western machines. It rises to a higher level when it can not only use but successfully repair the machines it uses. The third level is characterized by the ability to manufacture as well as to use and to repair Western machinery. The highest level of any civilization is marked by the capacity to invent as well as to use, to repair and to manufacture machines.

This dominant impression is often modified by what students and others discover in American schools and colleges in the

Near East but it is not wholly changed. A graduate of one of these colleges, now a representative of his country in the councils of the United Nations, a Christian man of remarkable skill and integrity, puts it this way to us: "Your gadgets have so bewitched you that you stand in danger of worshipping them, and to try to convert Asia to this kind of idolatry is not going to work. Surely the best you have must lie in the realm of the spirit, where man is face to face with his ultimate problems."

A Moslem religious leader is an even sharper critic in his appraisal of Western civilization. Muhammad Asad* writes: "For the modern European or American the question of the meaning and purpose of life has long since lost all practical importance. Important to him is only the question as to what *forms* life can assume and as to whether the human race as such is progressing toward ultimate mastership over Nature. . . . Religion (in the West) is a social convention. . . . Western civilization does not strictly deny God but has simply no room and no use for him. . . . Today the Western world is still completely lost in the adoration of material achievements and in the belief that comfort, and comfort alone, is a goal worth striving for. . . . The real deity is not a spiritual kind; it is comfort."

These appraisals of Western civilization bring sensitive Christians to the mood of deep humility and repentance. How can we live and work not only to increase discriminating judgment of the issues of life in all cultures but to make justification of materialistic appraisals impossible? Soul searching and rededication to the Lordship of Christ is the beginning of the answer.

IV

What are the Results of Missionary Service?

The Congregational Christian Churches of the United States have been vitally related to the cause of Christ in the Near East for more than a century and in the Philippine Islands since

* *Islam at the Crossroads*, p. 32.

1901. The most careful scrutiny of the record of the men and the women who have served in Moslem areas reveals *a steady emphasis* in personal and institutional work *upon life rather than upon liturgy, upon character rather than upon creed.* Through the decades there has been an undertone of realization that the great need of the ancient Christian churches and the Moslems alike has been an interpretation of religion in terms of life and character rather than in forms and ceremonies.

Broadly speaking, three great results have been achieved. **First, the Oriental Christian churches and others have caught a new vision of apostolic Christianity.** One may approve or disapprove of the formation and development of separate evangelical groups.* It was not the intention or desire of the early American Board missionaries to bring about this result. It was a case of the new wine breaking the old wineskins. With the Evangelical churches also, as in the West so in the East, there is no guarantee against stagnation and formalism except that of ever-renewed vital Christian experience. As a whole, these groups of Evangelical Christians have been steadily true to the faith of their fathers who were willing to sacrifice immediate communal welfare for intellectual freedom and other spiritual realities. Today no one can question the vitality of the Christian witness of these scattered though vibrant Evangelical churches.

The task of confronting the Moslems of the Near East with Jesus Christ is not one which can be accomplished by "foreign" missionaries alone. They may help but by and large they are a secondary force. It demands dedicated men and women of indigenous background, culture and contacts. Such people know their environment. They not only know, they *feel* the force of

* The ancient orthodox branches of Christianity had become formal, ingrowing and reactionary; many of their own members responded to new leadership and such new groups of Christians as the Armenian Evangelical Church resulted.

the factors which determine or undermine human welfare as no "foreigner" can possibly feel them. For this reason, we believe the rôle of the Evangelical churches in the Near East—whether in Turkish, Arabic or Persian areas—is deeply significant and may be very fruitful. A few of the leaders of these churches are convinced of this. They have knowledge of situations where the lives of Evangelical Christians living among Moslems furnish effective witness to Christ and where this witness is creative of new understanding and Christ-like character. They are actually confronting their neighbors with Jesus Christ. It is noteworthy that the most widely used Christian publications for Moslems have been written by one of these Evangelical leaders. More than this, two series of thoroughly tested brief booklets for Moslems, prepared by this indigenous Evangelical leader, have been translated and published for Moslems in all Arabic-speaking countries, also in Iran, in India, and in China.

This suggests the **second outstanding result** of the first century of American Board activity in the Near East. **The Moslem has been forced to reckon with a religious interpretation of life in which character counts for more than conformity.** This is what is meant by the following sentence from an experienced missionary in Turkey:

"Turks, constituting the most compact and virile Moslem nation, have established for American Missions in the Near East a credit balance of goodwill and confidence grounded on one hundred years of observation."

This sentence suggests such familiar facts as the willingness of Turkish officials in the earlier years to accept the word of a Protestant Christian at its face value without an oath. It suggests the high degree of confidence which the Turkish merchant or landowner has always had in dealing with American missionaries in business matters. It suggests such stories as are still reported regarding the integrity of certain Armenian young men in American schools who refused during World War I

even at the cost of their lives to act a lie. Here we are dealing with something that touches life with transforming moral power, something new to the observant Moslem. The tragic thing is that the Moslem Turk, owing to an almost century-long tyrannical regime of government, was compelled to be an "observer." For many years he was prevented in large measure from responding as he would have liked to the opportunities before him in the schools and hospitals and other community enterprises organized and nurtured by American Board missionaries. He was "observing" but now he is "participating." He can and does discriminate between a political and a spiritual type of the Christian faith. He does not know its full implications but he comes to the American missionary with such remarks as that of the young Moslem who said:

"I want to become a member of your organization. I want to be an American."

"But we have no organization," the missionary replied. "On the other hand if you are really interested in going to America or in becoming an American, you must go to see the American Consul. I am not concerned with such matters."

"No, you don't understand me. I want to join your group. I want to become an American in spirit. I don't want to change my faith, nor my customs, nor my family, nor my country, but I want to have the opportunity of associating with you and your friends and really becoming an American in character."

Needless to say, the missionary was somewhat taken aback. He hesitated for an answer. His Turkish friend took the opportunity to open his heart further and said:

"I have watched you and your friends for many years. I knew Doctor X. years ago when I was a boy. Where is he now? God bless him and give him peace! . . . I have come to admire especially three things in your American way of life. First, you speak with absolute frankness and honesty, you don't lie. Second, you hate vice in all its forms, and refuse to tolerate im-

purity in word and deed. Third, you make the teachings of Jesus which I have read over and over again in the 'Injil' very carefully, your practical and spiritual guide. I want to be this kind of an American."

However much one must disclaim the worth which such words imply, one cannot fail to see the awakening of discriminating power in spiritual matters. This is typical of what stands out as the second great achievement of the American Board among Moslems in the Near East during the period when its direct contacts with Moslems were far less than was steadily sought and made the object of earnest prayer.

The **third result of Missionary Service must be recognized as indirect.** With the founding of the Turkish Republic in 1922, there dawned a new era of life and thought for the Turkish people as a whole. Its founder, Mustapha Kemal, later known as Atatürk, and his colleagues surprised the world and probably themselves by establishing a regime which proved to have stability and by carrying forward many unique and spectacular reforms—political, economic, social and religious. This has been so far an era of direct and relatively easy contact between our missionaries and Turkish people of Moslem faith. It would be presumptuous to claim that the reforms undertaken were the result of missionary endeavor, even though the fact is that long acquaintance with North Americans in Turkey, most of whom were related in one way or another to American educational and medical institutions, had planted and nourished the *fundamental ideas of democracy in Turkish minds and hearts*. These ideas began to blossom in 1922. The first movement was away from Islam as a state religion. The pendulum swung far toward atheistic secularism. Amid the swift currents and cross-currents of national and international life, **the outstanding religious development,** not unconnected with the presence and activities of our missionaries, **has been the growing conviction that an enduring and worthy civilization cannot**

be achieved and maintained without a spiritual basis. This conviction goes deeper and is far more widespread than the casual visitor might surmise. With some Turkish leaders this conviction forces a reconsideration of the place of Islam in their national life. With others it means a search for a vital religion.

Two recent conversations come to mind. One gentleman, loath to confess the weakness of Islam as a spiritual force among his people, pointed to the reintroduction on an elective basis of religious lessons in the fourth and fifth grades of the government primary schools. He pointed also to the recent establishment of a "divinity course" at Ankara whose main purpose is to train liturgical leaders for mosque worship. He himself is a contributor to an unofficial monthly magazine which aims to make the voice of Islam as a religion heard in the land. These evidences of a renewed interest in religion seemed to him very significant.

In contrast to this friend, another gentleman spoke freely of the need of the Turkish people for a vital religion other than the old Islam. He insisted that Atatürk knew how to deal with every national issue except religion. He could not tolerate Islam with its rigid traditions and arid formalism, nor was he prepared to face the task of leading his people toward the Christian way of life. He seemed to feel that the adoption of Western ways might be a step in the right direction but history will show, said my friend, that Atatürk missed his chance to give the Turkish people the greatest gift of all—a moral and spiritual reformation.

It all adds up to the present situation in which, amid turmoil, uncertainties and hesitations, **the Turkish Moslem nation is engaged upon a great spiritual quest.** Shall it be the way of abundant life or shall it be the husks of materialism and atheism? **In this situation it is our privilege, our opportunity, and our responsibility to confront our Moslem friends with Jesus Christ.**

A Moslem graduate student sought out a friend of mine. He

said he wanted to ask him some questions. Here they are:

"First, have you ever read the Koran?" The answer was yes.

"Second, what translation of it did you read?" The answer was Palmer's English translation.

"Third, have you a copy of that translation in your own library? It is the best translation into English." My friend went to a bookshelf and took down the two volumes of Palmer's translation.

Fourth—and this evidently was the main question—"Why do you consider Christianity as a religion superior to Islam?" My friend thought a minute. In that minute he rejected several valid answers, realizing that each one of them would probably start an argument. He did not say that he thought the Christian Scriptures superior to the Koran. He did not say that he thought Christ superior to Mohammed. He did not say that he thought the culture of Christian countries superior to that of Moslem countries. *He gave as his basic, wisest answer the fact that Christianity had for some reason or other produced more lives devoted to the unselfish service of their fellowmen than any other religion he knew, including Islam.* The Moslem student listened thoughtfully. Then he thanked my friend and rose to leave. But my friend held him a moment longer.

"I wish to ask you a question," he said. "Please tell me, did you come to see me out of intellectual curiosity or because you were thinking of becoming a Christian?"

The Moslem student was silent for a long interval, then he said: "If you permit me, I do not wish to answer that question now." Like the rich young ruler, he went away sorrowful.

V

What is Our Purpose?

Let us ask ourselves these twelve questions: What do we really want to see happen in the Moslem lands of the world? Are we visualizing a situation in which our Western ways of

life and activity shall replace the manners and customs of the East? Do we desire to impose our creeds and dogma upon Eastern minds? Are we concerned even in the slightest degree with trying to fix the modes of expression in which spiritually transformed Moslem lives shall function? Are we dealing with superficial facts or with deep underlying spiritual forces? Are we trusting in conventions or in Christ? Are we willing to lose our denominational life if by that means the supremacy of the life-giving Spirit shall be real in Moslem hearts? What should be our share in the Moslem's future? What should be our purpose in having any relations whatsoever with him? How can we keep our attitudes as Americans at the same time Christian? Dare we be Christ-like in framing our missionary policies where he is involved? Dare we be less than Christ-like where he or anyone else is involved?

Let us consider at least four answers. We desire for our Moslem friends **a spiritual experience** which shall open their spiritual eyes and unstop their spiritual ears, an experience which shall put them into possession of Jesus' thought of God, His outlook upon life, His estimate of human personality, and His idea of human destiny, an experience through which they shall come to be new creatures in Christ Jesus. We believe that they are capable of sharing such an experience and that they will find it adequate not only **to set them upon the highway of noble individual and national character,** but also **to sustain them morally** in the conflict into which the multiplying contacts with Western life are rapidly thrusting them.

We of the Christian faith desire **that our Moslem friends should distinguish between genuine Christianity and Western civilization.** It is a matter of controversy between East and West as to how much, if anything, Western civilization, including democracy, owes to Christianity. There are able advocates of both views. Be that as it may, the true Western Christian today should be the last to attempt to defend the unchristian aspects

of Western civilization. We know how imperilled the life of the Spirit is in our passion for "ultimate mastership over Nature" and we should stand shoulder to shoulder with devout Moslems in our witness to the reality of spiritual life and the importance of the discovery of the meaning and purpose of life by every individual and every generation and nation. We must not worship the god of comfort. We must remember and inwardly appropriate one of the profoundest words of Jesus: "Whosoever will save his life, shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" (Matt. 16: 25, 26)

We believe that Jesus is for Moslems their only sure hope of worthy life and living, just as he is our only hope—Jesus in the fullness of his teachings, his life, his death and his resurrection. The spiritual experience which roots in contact with him and grows upon communion with him stands the multiple tests of life and death in unparalleled fashion. We look at the lives of some great non-Christians, with deep respect and admiration, but we believe that they would have reached even higher levels if they had consciously based their lives upon Christ. He has done and does more for more people than any other. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. . . . We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1: 4, 14)

In the face of such awful possibilities as we see today, of such colossal disasters on the one hand, and on the other of such supreme triumphs of righteousness if Jesus be taken seriously, it seems petty to urge anything that suggests the ecclesiastical or ceremonial garments of His Western followers. **We must not forget that Jesus was born and lived in the Near East,** that He can be understood by a Near Easterner far more readily than by an Occidental **and that He as Living Lord loves the people of the East as dearly as He loves the people of the West.**

VI

A Personal Forward Look

What of the future?

I must become more personal at this point. On the basis of what I have said, I would like to address myself directly to the groups of people who are in varying degrees concerned with confronting Moslems with Jesus Christ.

I have recently returned from a prolonged visit in the Near East. This experience has given me a unique, highly prized opportunity not only to meet again face to face many non-American friends of former days and to make the acquaintance of many new friends, but also to think some long thoughts about the future.

I am keenly aware of and rejoice in the new interest in other nations and peoples which Americans, by and large, are showing. The old isolationism is almost gone. We have been stabbed awake internationally during the last thirty-five years. We suddenly realize as a nation that we are a part of the world—inextricably bound up with all other peoples and nations in the bundle of human life on this tiny planet. What shall we do? How shall we think of other races, so different, as we think, from ourselves? Can we overcome our sense of superiority and treat all of them as brothers who after two terrible world wars are struggling with exceedingly difficult circumstances and in varying degrees are eager for new life on higher levels, materially and spiritually?

The Moslem world is a large group within our human family. We must become acquainted with them. We must discover how we can best help them. What do they *want* most? What do they *need* most? What most worthwhile is it within our power and capacity to share with them? Communism without, secularism within, economic distress, confusion as to sound basic policies in education, lack of a sufficient number of able leaders

along many lines, formalism in religion, excessive emphasis on appearances, lack of genuine social concern—these phrases indicate some aspects of a very difficult period in the life of all nations in the Near East.

I would say **to the members** of the Prudential Committee* **of the American Board**—*Continue long range planning* in our Near East Mission as you sustain current work. *Send more missionaries who are aware of the issues of the present day and who have deep spiritual resources.* Take real satisfaction from the way a very critical situation was faced in 1922 and from the decision of the Board at that time. You know that the Board decided to carry on under radically changed circumstances.† The intervening years have amply justified that decision, even though we have traversed only a short distance of the long road ahead. It is no longer a question of experimentation. The missionaries and the institutions you have sustained there have wrought nobly. Their methods of working are widely approved. I asked a prominent Turkish educator for his comment on one of our schools which he knew well. He looked at me steadily and then said with great emphasis: "Tell your missionaries to enlarge their schools. This particular school ought to be able to receive twice as many students as it now has. The Government has given you permission to build four new buildings. When will they be built? Re-establish International College for young men. Open other schools. We as a nation need very much what you American educators have to offer."

Our missionaries have been true to a great tradition of brotherly service in the name of Christ—disinterested and constructive. More than that, they have ingeniously followed the gleam of a glorious hope based upon faith in God and in his holy pur-

* The board of directors elected to direct policies and work.

† No religion was to be taught even in private schools of the new republic. With the exodus of the minorities there were no churches with which to work. Only Christian personality and action could serve for witness.

pose for mankind. It is hard to imagine anything more nearly approaching the reality of Christ face to face with a Moslem than a wise and skillful physician or surgeon or nurse dominated by the Spirit of Christ dealing with the physical and closely related spiritual ills of a Moslem patient. *It is convincingly true that he who has seen our medical personnel at work has seen Christ ministering to his brethren.*

I would say a word **to the missionaries of the Near East Mission.** There are *two supremely important functions* for you to ponder and to fulfill. *First,* explore and incarnate the meaning of the word "witness." You are where you are, not to protest, not to argue, not to interfere, but to interpret, to communicate and to incarnate a spirit and a life that reflects the Master. To know Him is life eternal and abundant. You can give no greater gift. You should be content with nothing less. *Second,* a correct appraisal of "the new" in the Moslem world demands imperatively (1) advance along the well-tested lines of service such as medical, educational and literary work and (2) willingness, readiness and time for more personal relations with adult friends in the community. As education, both formal and informal, makes its impact on society, the normal process of growth calls for personal help for those who appreciate the spiritual values for which many are really though often vaguely seeking. Better provisions should be made for what is most germane to our purpose among Moslem friends, that is, the communication of spiritual impetus.

To missionaries and also **to our colleagues in the indigenous Evangelical churches** of the Near East, I would emphasize again the spiritual potentialities of the Protestant churches in that whole area. *In a deep sense, I believe, these churches are called to be missionary churches.* Their members know better than any foreigner can know and understand the downward pull of their non-Christian environment. They know as few others in the Near East know the beauty and strength of the Gospel. *We*

are pioneers together in the work of Christ and his Kingdom of truth and goodwill. The most moving examples of Christ-like service I have seen across the years are associated with the names of Armenian friends. Truly the blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church of Christ. The Near East Mission as a whole during the last twenty-five years quite understandably has not been strongly church-centered in its consciousness. But the "fellowship" has never been forgotten. The Near East School of Theology at Beirut and its predecessor at Athens have steadily trained Christian pastors and other leaders, many of whom are now serving in strategic places. We are not only pioneers, *we are also stewards of the riches of Christ. It is required of stewards that they be found faithful.*

Of friends in our churches in the United States scattered over the length and breadth of our land *I would ask, Are you aware of the importance of the Moslem community in the world today?* What do you know about them? Will you give some time and thought to them? As a starter, three excellent brief books about Moslems and Islam have been prepared for you. Here they are:

"Assignment: Near East," by James Batal
"Introducing Islam," by J. Christy Wilson
"Near East Panorama," by Glora M. Wysner

Read these books, then put yourself sympathetically in the place of a person of Moslem faith. Try to look at life and especially at Western civilization as he does.

This leads me to my second suggestion. *Do you realize how insidiously the attitudes of secularism are affecting American life, even the life and thought of our churches and church folk?* Are we taking Christ and Christianity seriously today? As you think this point over, will you not resolve that so far as in you lies, you will refute with life and with Christian attitudes the criticism passed so easily and widely these days by other nations upon America? *The roots of our civilization are not material-*

istic even though the fruits so often appear so. Every life counts in its contribution toward making America what it should be among the nations of the world.

Deepening insight into the fact that Western civilization as well as Islam is essentially a spiritual problem and not one that can be solved by any scheme of organized social contacts is fastening attention on the primary importance of the message of life of each individual follower of Christ. We are reminded that in the creative experience of the first disciples of our Lord, the simple, living witness of one after another of those who had known Him, realizing that one who had seen Him had seen the Father, was what created the new society and formed the bond between its members. A new outlook upon life, a new sense of moral and spiritual power, a new bond of fellowship with God, a willingness to try to make God real to men and to serve their needs—these phrases partially describe the experience to which each individual follower of Christ came, and must come if there is to be vitality.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Fred Field Goodsell has been for nineteen years Executive Vice President of the American Board, directing the policies and planning the strategy for all our missions. Before that he was for twenty-three years educational and administrative missionary in the Near East.

Dr. Goodsell came by his missionary life naturally! He was born in a Home Missionary parsonage in Minnesota, spent much of his boyhood in California, graduated from the University of California, then from Hartford Seminary. At Hartford he won a travelling fellowship which took him to Germany for further study at the Universities of Marburg and Berlin. Just

before he went to Europe he married Lulu K. Service who has shared his missionary life as wife, mother, and hostess par excellence.

Dr. Goodsell has always been a "terrific" worker. As a boy in school and college he worked his way waiting on tables, washing dishes, cutting timber, washing gold, hauling wood, and even taking census among Chinese laborers in the peatlands of the West. He is a natural student, a tremendous reader, and an excellent linguist. Trees, stars, books, languages and people are the objects of his study. He reads Hebrew, Greek and Latin, speaks Turkish fluently, and does fairly well in French, German, Portuguese and Russian.

In Turkey he became a student of the Turkish people, their history, culture and language. He focussed his thorough mind on Islam as a religion and the culture which sprang from it. He lived in three regimes and tried to understand them all—the Sultanate, the Revolutionary Party, and the Republic. Since he left Turkey to become an officer of the Board he has made two comprehensive world tours of the Board fields and a number of shorter trips to Europe, South America and the Near East. He has always been interested in the ecumenical movement and served with that in mind on the International Missionary Council and the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, being Chairman of the latter for one term of two years.

It is typical of Dr. Goodsell that his retirement in 1949 simply meant a shift of activities. He spent eight months, from December, 1949, to July of 1950, visiting the Near East and Europe and had hardly returned when he was urgently requested to become Acting General Secretary of the Division of Foreign Missions in the newly formed National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A. His wisdom and experience will help to start this new Division right. He will take up his new post January 1.

WANTED — TEACHERS FOR THE NEAR EAST

The American Board is looking for teachers for Turkey, Greece, and the Lebanon. Perhaps among the young men and women in your church may be just the one!

1. **Three year term teachers** to serve for the following schools and subjects:

   American Academy for Girls, Scutari. English; Science (women)

   Izmir (Old Smyrna) Beginning English (woman)

   Talas (American Boys' School) English

   Tarsus (American Boys' School) English, Mathematics, Science, Physical Education.

2. **For career service** (anywhere from five years to a lifetime) the following vacancies are listed:

   Scutari (American Academy for Girls) Three women to teach English or Mathematics. Teaching couple for Business Management and Supervision of the Boarding Department.

   Izmir. Woman to teach Physical Education and Sports. Both this and the Beginning English teacher mentioned above call for a permanent career person if possible.

   Talas. Teaching couple—to combine English, Mathematics and Science with Administrative responsibilities.

   Tarsus (American Boys' School) woman as dormitory matron and part-time teacher of English.

3. Under the Fullbright Act the United States government is willing to allow **nine teaching fellowships** in our schools. This means one full year of service, which offers a splendid opportunity for observation as well, for a person with exceptional ability and professional excellence as well as teaching experience. The following subjects are called for: Library Science, Tests and Measurements, English, Social work. For women and to work in Greece or Turkey. For men: Physical Education or Mathematics, in Turkey only.

If you find a young person interested in any of the above write to Miss Margaret Blemker, Secretary for the Near East, The American Board, 14 Beacon Street, Boston, Massachusetts.

WORLD SERVICE EXPOSITION IN HARTFORD

Immanuel's Experiment with Missions

By DENISE DOUGLAS LYNN

The World Service Exposition at Immanuel Congregational Church in Hartford, Connecticut, was for us a new approach in arousing interest in the mission field. The Exposition ran for three days (Friday and Saturday afternoons and evenings, ending Sunday morning with the church service). The Church parlors were transformed into an informal Exposition hall—ten booths along the walls showing the work of the Church in ten different world areas, beginning with Greater Hartford, and including home and foreign missions and our work for "displaced persons." Each display was prepared by a different group in Immanuel Church; and a member of each group stayed with its exhibit to answer questions during the Exposition. The Hartford Seminary Foundation lent a display of books for adults and children that could be purchased. And at one end of the room, punch and cookies were dispensed to visitors. In fact, a festive atmosphere prevailed, with much visiting about of friends.

In the afternoon sessions the best available slides and motion pictures were shown continually and there were special movies for children in the evening. In each evening session we heard a speaker. Dr. James F. English described the work supported in Connecticut by missions, Miss Ruth Isabel Seabury spoke on "world missions," Sunday morning Rev. Philip M. Widenhouse preached on home missions, marking the close of the World Service Exposition.

How did it happen?

The Exposition was the unexpected offspring of a routine meeting of the church's World Service Committee nearly a year

before when one of the members told of having seen a successful missionary exhibition in Scotland which might be adapted to the needs of Immanuel Congregational Church. The idea produced enthusiasm and, as a result, the World Service Exposition was planned in its broad outline, roughly modelling it after the Scottish exhibition. A steering committee of three (a man and two women) was chosen and things swung into action. First, a date was set, October 20, 21, 22, nearly a year away. The project was presented to the Prudential Committee and approved; then it was presented to the largest single group in the church, Immanuel Church Women, who promised it their help and support. Nearly every other group in the church was then told about the proposed Exposition and invited to take part in it. The hardest part of this was in helping the groups visualize something they had never seen before; but it was accomplished.

By this time it was spring. Ten groups within Immanuel Church had promised to be responsible for exhibits; they included everything from the Church School to the Golden Age Club. An eleventh promised to provide simple refreshments. The steering committee, meeting with representatives of each group, divided up the subjects chosen so that each group had the spring and summer months to get its ideas into shape.

Immediately after Labor Day the actual work of getting the exhibits ready started with a bang. The various groups worked out their projects, using pictures, charts, posters, and objects brought from various sections of the world by missionaries and other travellers. Several of the groups invited "nationals" from the nearby Hartford Seminary Foundation to be present in native costume as part of their exhibits. These guests added to the local color and seemed to enjoy the chance to talk to the many visitors.

The night before the Exposition opened the church parlors were transformed into an Exposition hall, with booths along the walls; and the various groups in a few hours had their proj-

ects ready for display. This evening in itself was a social occasion of the finest sort, with nearly fifty people working together —on MISSIONS! (Incidentally, although extreme care was taken of the objects lent because of their sentimental value, the objects in the Exposition were insured against any possible loss or injury.)

Every effort was made from the beginning to obtain publicity for the World Service Exposition. This was necessary because the project was completely unprecedented and also because missions are sometimes thought of as the exclusive property of "the ladies' sewing circle." The local newspapers were coöperative. The church bulletins occasionally carried reminders about the Exposition. One of the members of the steering committee with contacts with councils of church women in Hartford spoke personally to nearly every key group of women, inviting them and their friends to attend one or all of the sessions. Personal invitations were sent to neighboring ministers and churches, crossing denominational lines. Finally, a program, carefully worked out and printed, was distributed freely in advance of the Exposition, as well as serving as a guide at the actual time.

How did it go?

A constant stream of visitors from over a wide area saw the Exposition. These included Immanuel Church members, people from other churches, and neighboring ministers and church workers. This was in spite of what might have proved insurmountable competition: the loveliest of fall weekends, when people would normally be away, *plus* innumerable other scheduled events in over-busy Hartford, *plus* the fact that this was a new, unfamiliar venture. The reaction of most visitors seemed to be, "I never saw anything like this before. Isn't it *interesting!*"

The benefits of the Exposition were many and some were intangible, but probably these are the outstanding ones:

Nearly every group in the church participated, learning a

good deal in the process. The men were given a natural chance to take part in working out the exhibits. (And it should probably be noted here that a few usually recalcitrant husbands yielded to the inevitable and helped their wives with the projects.) The morale of the large number who took part was fine, the coöperation was splendid, and there was a real sense of satisfaction that came from so many people working together so harmoniously to produce a whole.

The results of the Every-member Canvass aren't yet complete but the indication is that Benevolence giving is up!